



Workforce Development

Why is this
initiative
important?

All Weld County residents should be able to have a job they love where they can thrive economically and personally. In addition, a successful community also relies on employers having the skilled workforce they need.





Workforce Development

What are we doing in this initiative?

The Weld Trust will convene the various groups working toward developing an effective workforce system. This comprehensive system will help students explore options and gain experience, as well as help employers recruit and train the talent they need.

Additionally, The Weld Trust will help with the development of career pathways, work-based learning opportunities, and adult upskilling training resources.





Workforce Development

What are the priorities in this initiative?

- **Systems Development**

Weld County needs a website resource for all job-explorers and industry employers to access and utilize easily.

- **Skills Development/Training Programs**

Weld County employers and students of all ages need vocational and technical opportunities for workforce development.

- **Industry and School District Partnerships**

Employers and employees need to work together to reskill and upskill Weld County's workforce.

- **Student Work-Based Learning Opportunities**

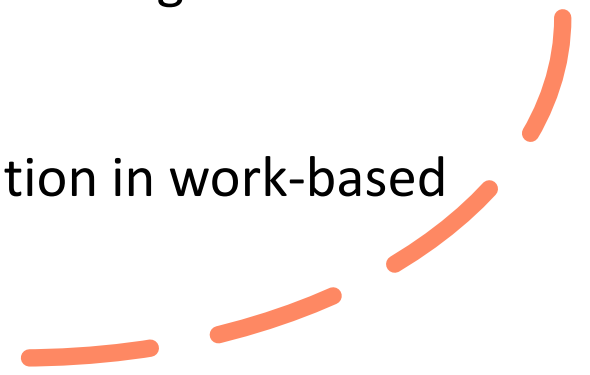
Students in Weld County need additional opportunities for job shadows, internships, and apprenticeships.



Workforce Development

What are our goals for this initiative?

- Increase by 40% the number of businesses in Weld County that agree to host job shadows, internships, and apprenticeships.
- Increase by 75% the number of businesses that develop videos for use on the workforce development website to be created.
- Increase the number of people gainfully employed, earning Associate of Applied Science degrees, and technical certificates.
- Increase partnerships between industries and school districts, as measured by district reports.
- Increase by 100% the number of students accessing career and technical education resources.
- Increase student awareness of and participation in work-based learning opportunities by at least 50%.



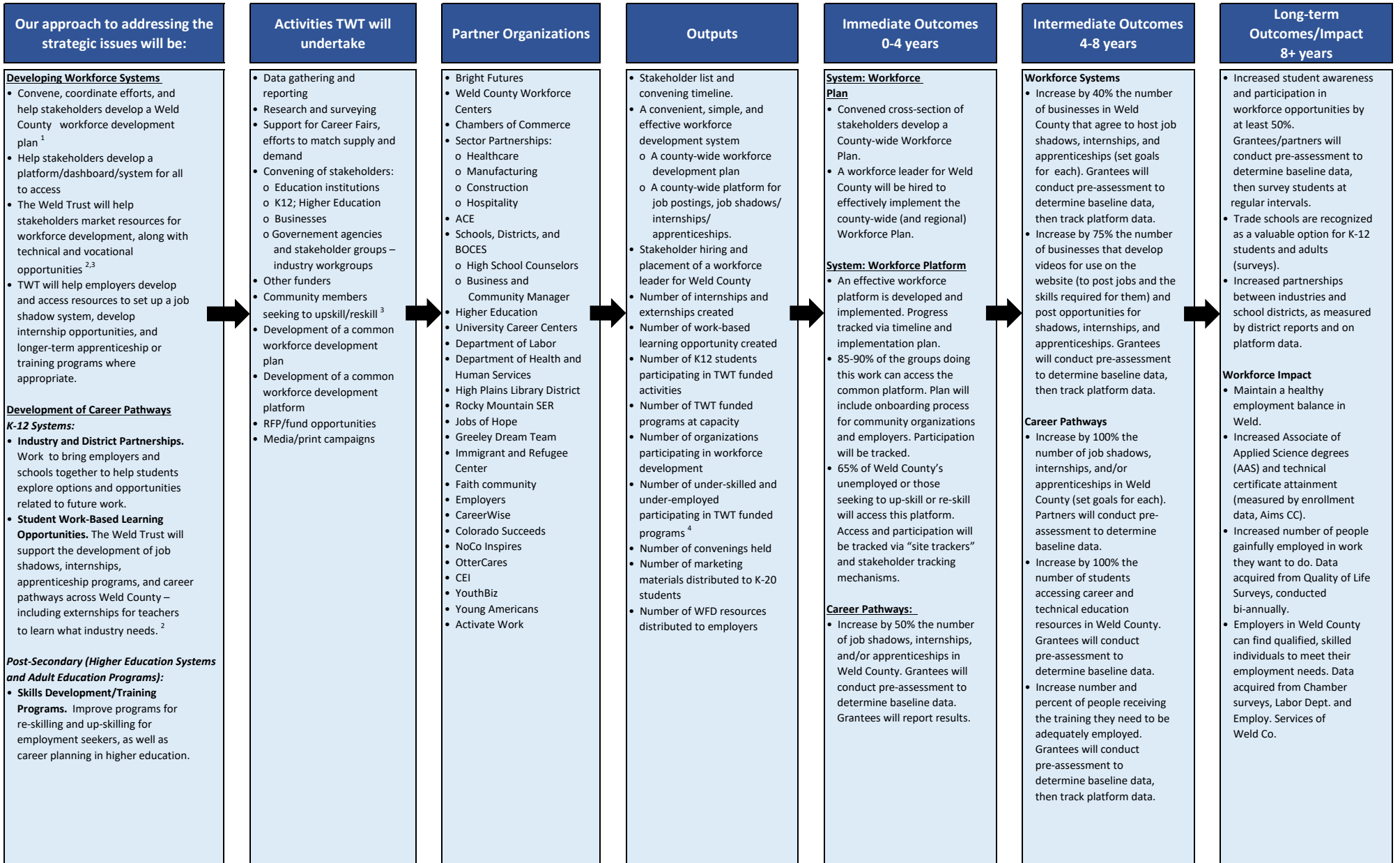
Workforce Development Logic Model



Mission Statement: To promote excellence in health and education in Weld County.

Initiative Statements – The Weld Trust will help market resources and fund endeavors to connect technical and vocational opportunities to Weld County employers, students and workers of all ages, and institutions. It will support the development of internships, apprenticeships, and career pathways across Weld County, including upskilling and reskilling of the workforce. The Weld Trust will align, convene, and work with countywide leadership and stakeholders to guide long-term sustainable strategies for workforce development.

The Weld Trust has met with multiple stakeholders in the workforce development realm in Weld County, listening for the issues and needs in the community. Throughout that information gathering period, it has become evident that there are numerous attempts being made to solve similar issues in different sectors of the workforce (from health to manufacturing), at different levels (K-12, Higher Education, and beyond), and through different means (high schools, workforce centers, and within industry). From our vantage point, there needs to be a pulling together of all groups to develop a simple, yet workable, plan for Weld County that will integrate all partners and get them to start working together to meet the needs of employers and those who are seeking employment, now and in the future. Our goal in this area is to help develop a system in Weld County that will increase awareness of and access to workforce or career opportunities, eventually leading people to satisfying and rewarding careers.



ASSUMPTIONS and ECOSYSTEM

1. Colorado is currently introducing legislation that would strengthen the high school to college workforce pipeline Colorado Connects Workforce - Chalkbeat
2. Education Grants team recently reviewed a proposal from Weld Re-3J to support their expansion of Virtual Job Shadow (VJS), which is a workforce and career development platform that has been adopted by Weld RE-3J and by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. The platform is highly customizable and user friendly VJS - Colorado Department of Labor and Employment Case Study
3. Workforce reskilling and upskilling programs exist in Weld County, Weld Adult Employment Programs. It is not known if the programs and funding are being underutilized (lack of enrollment). This logic model calls for The Weld Trust to support initiatives that would encourage adult workers to engage with the programs already created or bolster the reach of current programs to increase enrollment.
4. In 2021, Colorado had 160,400 unemployed and 119,300 part-time employees. This report from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics gives raw data comparing Colorado to national averages.

The unemployment rate in Weld County, as of March 2022, is 3.8%, compared to a state average of 3.1%. Weld County, as most of the State of Colorado, has rebounded from the high unemployment rate of the 1st year of the COVID-19 Pandemic. In June of 2020, Weld County has an unemployment rate of 10.6%, according to data from this St. Louis FED report. Whereas, unemployment rates do not consider underemployment in their statistics, conversations in the community have highlighted the need to upskill and reskill adult workers to ensure that Weld County adults maintain relevant and satisfactory employment. Additional State of Colorado data: Colorado Employment Situation April 2022

The State of Colorado has made an economic commitment to enhancing opportunities for students and adult workers that want to pursue "future-ready" careers. Colorado has set aside funds to support career training in K-12 and in post-secondary education, and the Student Success and Workforce Revitalization Commission has issued 6 recommendations: 1. Offer grants to build college, employer, and community partnerships. 2. Build systems to track the long-term educational and economic success of students. 3. Redefine student success to include employment opportunities. 4. Pass laws to help students find high-need, well-paying jobs. 5. Develop a multi-year job-training plan to close the gaps among residents of color, communities, and economic class in earning degrees. 6. Identify long-term sustainable funding for post-high school education.

EXTERNAL FACTORS (barriers/facilitators)

- One of the main barriers and some of the challenges are related to awareness. Many people don't know all the great work that is going on and how to better align and work towards common goals and greater good for the community – without duplicating efforts.
- Due to COVID and the economy, mental health concerns are on the rise and school counselors' ability to provide feedback and support kids with their career paths is taking somewhat of a back seat.
- We have a lack of people participating in the labor market. We have fewer people who are competing for employment, more people who have retired and won't likely re-enter the employment setting. There are also people who have pivoted and gone into different sectors due to COVID.
- Access to Resources, as currently envisioned at The Weld Trust, is only for K-12 aged students. During the focus group conversation, a number of items (childcare for adults who are receiving upskilling or reskilling training at night; transportation issues) came up as potential barriers to accessing workforce training programs. Many also can't seem to get over that hurdle of, well, it's a short-term training (it might take three or six months) but for those three or six months, how am I going to pay my rent?
- Every employer seems to have a different set of things they want their employees trained to do, some of which are very basic. Are there some skills that most all employers can agree on that all existing workers may need? That may require the development of a training program for basic skills to be done virtually prior to being assigned a more technical training program for a specific employer.

